SCADDING

CANADA IN
SCULPTURE
1887

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# CANADA IN SCULPTURE.

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BY

HENRY SCADDING, D.D. CANTAB.

CANON OF TORONTO.

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# CANADA IN SCULPTURE.

BY HENRY SCADDING, D.D.

In the Senate House of the University of Cambridge in England there were to be seen, down to the year 1884, four fine life-size statues in white marble, each of them having associations connected with it of considerable public interest. The Senate House it may be explained, is the scene of all the great university ceremonies, just as the Sheldonian Theatre is, at Oxford. It consists of one grand apartment, one hundred and one feet in length, forty-two in breadth, and thirty-two in height. On the shining white and black marble floor of this noble hall, the four statues referred to were conspicuous; two on one side, and two on the other, each raised high on a pedestal bearing an appropriate inscription. One, on the north side, represented George I; and one exactly opposite to it, on the south side, represented George II; the third, on the south side, preserved the shape of a former Duke of Somerset, by name Charles Seymour; and the fourth, opposite to this, was a famous counterfeit presentment of the younger Pitt.

It is a slight discovery which I once chanced to make in connection with one of these statues, namely that of George II, now many years ago, that I desire to put on record in this paper, for the benefit of future visitors to Cambridge from these parts, and Canadians generally. It must however be noticed that George II no longer stands on the floor of the Senate House but must be sought for within the walls of the adjoining Public Library of the University, whither, as we shall presently learn, the statue of George I has also been removed. Some of the legendary lore connected with these marble associates of George II may be briefly given in passing. The figure of George I, which is by the sculptor Rysbrack, recalls a pair of famous epigrams, so good that they are found in most collections.

The first two Georges were very friendly to the University of Cambridge, regarding it probably as in some degree more favourably disposed than Oxford towards the House of Hanover. Besides the

donation of a thousand guineas to the building fund for the erection of the Senate House, George I had also presented, to the university library, three thousand guineas' worth of books. It so happened that just at the time of this gift of books to Cambridge some addition was made to the military force stationed at Oxford. A wit of Oxford, a representative of the supposed Toryism of the place, Dr. Trapp, ventured to express himself on the occasion, thus:

> The king observing with judicious eyes,
> The state of both his Universities,
> To one he sends a regiment; for why?
> That learned body wanted loyalty.
> To th' other books he gave, as well discerning
> How much that loyal body wanted learning.

Of course, never yet out-done in such contests, Cambridge soon produced its counter-joke, and put the case thus:

> The King to Oxford sent his troop of horse
> For Tories own no argument but force:
> With equal care to Cambridge books he sent,
> For Whigs allow no force but argument.

This was done by a representative Whig of Cambridge, Sir William Browne, of Peter-house, Knight, M. D., founder of the coveted gold medals for Greek and Latin epigram, besides scholarships, in the University.—There is no epigram that I know of associated with the statue of the Duke of Somerset (also by Rysbrack) but it recalls a statesman or personage very conspicuous in his day about the courts successively of James II., Anne and William III. He was distinguished from the other dukes of the same name as the "Proud Duke" from his general carriage and conduct. It was in great measure through independent action on his part at a critical moment in James II's reign, that the succession ultimately passed to the House of Hanover. On the pedestal of his statue he is styled: *Acerrimus libertatis publicæ vindex.* He was Chancellor of the University from 1689 to 1748.

The statue of Pitt has an epigram associated with it, locally remembered. Pitt had graduated at Cambridge in 1776 and had represented the University in several successive parliaments. In 1812 it was resolved to erect a statue to his honour, and funds were so liberally supplied for the purpose, that not only was the statue erected, but the Pitt Scholarship, value fifty pounds per annum, established. A

place for the statue was desired in the Senate House; but the spot considered most eligible for it there was occupied by an allegorical figure of "Glory"—academic Glory—not very remarkable, the gift of some former grateful member of the University. It was also mischievously put about that it was an effigy of Queen Anne, as a pasquinade of the day expressed it:

"Academic Glory,
Still in disguise a Queen, and still a Tory;"

This statue of Glory was transferred to one of the adjoining Schools; that of Law, and Nollekens' Pitt was set up in its place. From some anti-Pittite came forth the epigram above referred to: it reads as follows:

Sons of Sapience, you here a fair emblem display;
For wherever Pitt went he drove Glory away.

An unfair saying, as the sayings of epigrams so often are, and the inevitable rejoiner followed:

Why thus exclaim and thus exert your wit
At making Glory here give place to Pitt?
We'll raise his statue of the finest stone,
For never here a brighter Glory shone.

The sole inscription at the base of the statue is the word PITT. It had been ordered by the committee appointed to superintend its erection, that "it should be free in every part, from emblematical or allegorical devices:" a prohibition characteristic of the university whose famous professor of Mathematics, Vince, held that "Paradise Lost was all very fine but proved nothing." The remuneration received by Nollekens was three thousand guineas. Pitt was further honoured at Cambridge at a later period. At the time of his death in 1806, funds for erecting statues to him in London came in so abundantly that a large surplus remained which in 1824 was devoted to the erection of the important structure known as the Pitt Press, the scene of the printing operations of the University of Cambridge, just as the Clarendon is the scene of those of the University of Oxford. (Most persons have probably noticed the very Italian looking imprint *è Prelo Pittiano* on the title page of Latin and Greek books printed at Cambridge.)

I now proceed to narrate my discovery made some years ago in connection with the statue of George II. at Cambridge. The king

is represented in what is called the Roman style. He is figured as a successful Roman general or imperator, laureated, and wearing the military chlamys or toga, artistically disposed in such a way as to allow the beautiful lorica and various trappings of the Roman military costume, to be well seen. He slightly leans against a low truncated column on which rests a rather large ball or globe: the king's right arm gracefully encircles this object.

One day I was standing on a bench close by this statue, for the purpose of getting over the heads of the surrounding assemblage, a better view of some academic proceedings going on at the upper end of the great hall, where the statue was then placed. Thus elevated, the eye was brought on a level with the ball or globe just spoken of. With considerable indifference at the moment, I gave a little flourish of a pocket handkerchief over its upper surface just to brush away some of the dust which apparently had not been disturbed since the time of the erection of the statue. To my great suprise I suddenly discerned a very familiar word cut on the marble of the ball in rather large characters, so large that the word extended from one side to the other of the upper portion of the sphere: that very familiar word was CANADA. The globe placed in the position in which it was seen, and thus inscribed, was intended to be an emblem of the acquisition of Canada, just at the close of the reign of George II. In various funeral orations and academic elegies on the occasion of this king's death still preserved, the conquest of Canada figures largely; and when a few years later the sculptor Wilton, designed a statue to be set up in his honour in the Senate House at Cambridge, he adopted this method of commemorating the great event. It is probable that the sculptor chose the Roman style for the figure to make it match pleasantly with the statue of George I., on the opposite side of the hall, which was in this style. Wilton was also the sculptor of the cenotaph of Gen. Wolfe in Westminster Abbey, which is treated likewise in the classical manner.

On one side of the truncated column, on which the king leans, a long chain of medallions is seen suspended. Each of these is supposed to be commemorative of some success to the British arms in the king's reign. The name of Quebec appears on one of them. Words on some of the others are: Guadaloupe Capta MDCCIX., Quiberon, Senegal, Lagos, Minden, Victoria in Oriente.

The orb which the king's arm here encircles had more real signifi-

cance than any orb ever before seen in the hand of a British king. On the great seal of all the early kings of England the sovereign is seen seated, with an orb in his left hand; and a part of the ceremony of coronation to this day consists in placing in the hands of the sovereign an orb, with a certain admonition—a mere shadow of old imitative custom, borrowed from usages at Byzantium, when the imperial grasp on the *orbis terrarum* had grown feeble. But the globe encircled by the arm of George II. indicated a real possession, whose importance has increased as the years have rolled on. Parkman has observed, in the preface of his book on Pontiac: "The conquest of Canada was an event of momentous consequence in American history. It changed the political aspect of the continent, prepared the way for the independence of the British colonies, rescued the vast tracts of the interior from the rule of military despotism, and gave them eventually to the keeping of an orderly democracy," language to which there will be little demur on the Canadian side of the line. Thus, the grandeur of the idea symbolized by the globe held by George II. is only surpassed by the grandeur of that which is symbolized by the globe in the hand of Columbus, as seen in Persico's group entitled "The Discovery," at the south end of the steps of the Capitol at Washington.—The quiet, easy pose of the king, and the pleased glance upward of the eyes, were doubtless intended by the sculptor to indicate the happy circumstances and comparative ease of the conquest of Canada; as expressed likewise in words by George III., in his memorable first speech to Parliament on his accession to the throne: "I reflect with pleasure," the new monarch said, "on the success with which the British arms have been prospered this last summer. The total reduction of the vast Province of Canada, with the city of Montreal, is of the most interesting consequence, and must be as heavy a blow to my enemies as it is a conquest glorious to us; the more glorious because effected almost without effusion of blood, and with that humanity which makes an amiable part of the character of this nation."

Grandly significant indeed was the name CANADA on the globe in the king's hand at Cambridge in 1766. But how much more grandly significant is it now, when we have actually taken possession of the whole area indicated on that symbolical sphere; when we have covered it throughout its length and breadth with settlements of industrious men and women; built villages, towns, cities, at innumer-

able points within its limits; have compacted all together in one comprehensive civil system, so far as innate perversity in poor blind humanity has not offered obstruction; have actually braced the whole together with a literal girdle of iron and steel, a continuous railway track reaching from sea to sea—practical realization at last of the dreams of how many enthusiasts of former days; not merely a swift and easy medium of intercommunication for the Canadian people among themselves, but a highway and thoroughfare for ready intercourse in all future time between the teeming populations of Asia, Australasia and Europe.

As to the questionable taste of setting up a king of England in the guise of a Roman imperator or Cæsar, it is to be observed, before leaving the subject, that this masquerading in marble sprang out of the studies pursued so absorbingly at the time at Eton and in the public schools generally of Great Britain. That was an age when on the floor of both Houses quotations from Horace and Virgil were recognized and enjoyed, and a mythological allusion was understood. In that age, which was prolific of apt inscriptions on coins and medals, originated the Latin motto which some will remember on the public seal of the old Province of Upper Canada: *Imperii porrecta Majestas, Custode rerum Cæsare,*—"The greatness of the empire extended under the guardianship of a Cæsar," it ran, with direct allusion to the very extension of the empire symbolized by the globe of the statue of George II., and affording another instance of the fashion once in vogue of saluting an English king as a Cæsar. We shall, some of us perhaps, recall Thackeray's grotesque little sketch labelled "*Avé, Cæsar,*" in his book on the four Georges, showing Sir Robert Walpole in the act of announcing to the king his accession to the throne. But we must take Thackeray's pictures, both of pen and pencil, *cum grano.* He, like several other brilliant essayists and historians that might be named, when he approached the weak points of a public character, was apt to proceed as though he held a brief against the offender and to exaggerate considerably. In regard to George II., it will be becoming in us, at this distance of time and place, charitably to accept the general truth of what is said of him on the pedestal of the statue we have been contemplating. We can read it for ourselves in the photograph copy, which, however, has failed to give legibly two or three of the lines here supplied from another source. The inscription reads as follows: *Georgio Secundo*

*patrono suo optimè merenti, semper venerando; quòd volenti Populo, justissimè, humanissimè, in Pace et in Bello, feliciter imperavit; Quòd Academiam Cantabrigiensem fovit, auxit, ornavit, hanc statuam, . . . suis sumptibus poni curavit Thomas Holles, Dux de Newcastle, Academiæ Cancellarius, A.D. MDCCLXVI.* I may add that I have never fallen in with any one who ever noticed the inscribed word *Canada*, which is to be found on this statue. The photograph was taken expressly for myself, through the friendly co-operation of Mr. Elijah Johnson, Trinity Street, Cambridge. The scale, however, is too small to admit of the word being seen.

My second instance of Canada in sculpture will be the beautiful emblematical figure of Canada to be discovered among the statuary which so richly ornaments the Prince Consort's memorial in London, on the site of the first great International Exhibition of 1851. This very elaborate structure, after a design by Gilbert Scott, is somewhat in the style of the well-known Scott Memorial in Edinburgh. The central and principal object in it is a seated statue of the Prince Consort, admirably executed in bronze by Foley, placed on a lofty platform, to which an ascent is made by a pyramid of steps, a canopy and spire surmounted by a cross rising above all to the height of one hundred and eighty feet. A folio volume might be filled, and has been filled, with the architectural and artistic details of this structure, which is one of the most wonderful monumental buildings of modern times, the combined production of the most eminent sculptors and workers in metal and mosaic of the three kingdoms. All the arts and sciences, with the distinguished personages whose names are associated therewith in ancient and modern history, are somewhere or other finely idealized in or about it. A thorough study of all its parts should be patiently made.

Among the most conspicuous groups of sculptured objects are four of colossal dimensions, each of them masterly and full of poetry, placed on a grand pedestal at the four angles of the enclosure, just at the base of the steps, symbolical of the four quarters of the globe, this monument being commemorative, not only of the Prince Consort, but also of the great International Exhibition of 1851, the first idea of which was due to him, and was carried into effect through his instrumentality. In each of these corner groups a gigantic animal, characteristic of the quarter of the globe typified, plays a conspicuous part, bearing on its back an emblematic figure of the quarter of the

globe represented. Europe (by Macdowell) is seen mounted on an ox or bull ; Asia (by Foley), on an elephant ; Africa (by Theed), on a camel ; America (by Bell), on a bison. Each continental figure is surrounded by graceful forms, typifying the chief nations or subdivisions of that quarter of the world, distinguished and made known by appropriate symbols or the mode of attire. America has around her South America, Mexico, the Republic of the United States, and Canada. I shall confine myself to this group of the sculptor Bell, and particularly to that portion of it which illustrates my present subject. This group, as an official document sets forth, consists of a central figure of America, as a quarter of the globe, mounted on a Bison charging through the long prairie grass. Their advance is directed by the United States on the one side, while on the other Canada attends them, pressing the rose of England to her breast. [It is probable, had Confederation been an accomplished fact when the Prince Consort's memorial was designed, Canada would have been treated with even greater distinction than that which is here accorded to her, and spoken of perhaps in somewhat different terms ; but the beautiful thought of the sculptor causing her forever to be seen "pressing the rose of England to her breast" atones for everything]. In the other figures of the composition are presented Mexico rising from a trance, and South America equipped for the chase. The details and emblems are as follows :—The figure of America is of the Indian type and in native costume and feathered head-dress, and the housings of the bison are a grizzly bear's skin. In her right hand is a stone-pointed feathered lance, with Indian totems of the grey squirrel and humming bird, and on her left arm she bears a shield with blazons of the principal divisions of the hemisphere : the eagle for the States, the beaver for Canada, the lone star for Chili, the volcanoes for Mexico, the alpaca for Peru, and the Southern Cross for Brazil. In the grass, aroused by the passage of the bison, is a rattlesnake. The features of the figure representing the United States are of the North American, Anglo-Saxon, civilized type ; the tresses are surmounted by an eagle's plume and by a star, which is repeated on her baldrick, at the point of the sceptre in her right hand, and on the bracelet round her left arm ; in her left hand is a wreath formed by the leaves of the evergreen oak. At her feet lies the Indian quiver with but an arrow or two left in it. Her dress is partly thin and partly of a

thicker texture, to recall the great range of her climate. In the presentation of Canada, who, the same document goes on to state, is habited in furs [as a matter of course, it might perhaps have been added parenthetically, although it must be allowed they are made quite light and etherial], the features are of a more English type. In her head-dress are woven the maple leaf of the mainland and the May-flower of Nova Scotia. In her right hand are ears of wheat, of which we receive from her such large supplies, and at her feet are a pair of snow-shoes and a branch and cone of the pine tree.—This is the figure which is reproduced in the photograph.

I have never myself seen the Prince Consort memorial in its perfected state. From some description which I had read of it a good while ago, I was under the impression that a figure of Canada existed somewhere upon it, which I much desired to see. I accordingly commissioned a friend who was visiting London to procure for me when there a photograph of it. The disappointing report however was brought back after repeated inquiries in the neighbouring studios, that there was no figure of Canada on the Albert Memorial. I supposed for a time that I had been under a misapprehension; but again after reading some casual account of this memorial, I became convinced that such a figure was really there somewhere. I now applied to a friend in London, and begged him to make a particular search, and to procure if possible a photograph of it. I now learned that many photographs of the grand group of America in which Canada was included were to be had, but that they were usually taken from such a point of view that the figure of Canada was not seen, being generally eclipsed by the figure representing the United States Republic. Just when it was about to be concluded useless to continue the search for a photograph showing the figure of Canada, one was by great good fortune stumbled on by my friend. It was instantly secured, and forwarded to me. From this I have had an enlarged copy of the figure of Canada made by Mr. Lemaitre of No. 324 Yonge Street, who has cleverly detached it for me from the group "America". I have no doubt that Canadians visiting London will soon have no difficulty in finding out the graceful symbol of their country of which we have been discoursing, and that photographs showing it favourably will be readily procured.

One good effect resulting from Bell's magnificent group will be, it is hoped, the disengagement in the mind of the general public, of the

United States Republic, from America, with which it is so often identified and confounded—a confusion promoted by the phraseology very generally employed in the United States and thoughtlessly in England. As well might Germany be spoken of in common parlance as Europe, or Russia as Asia, as the United States Republic as America. Here in the Memorial group the United States Republic is seen simply as one of the constituents of America, with Canada, equally a constituent of the continent, by her side, "pressing the rose of England to her breast," and helping to guide the bison through the wild prairie grass.

After all, however, perhaps it is not much to be wondered at that, amidst the multitude of emblematical objects appearing in sculpture on the Prince Consort's Memorial, the figure of Canada should be overlooked by the generality. But it should not be overlooked by the Canadian. He, often solitary in the dense throng of London, should make a point of singling it out and enjoying it. Hereafter, probably, that figure will be adopted as the standard idealization of Canada, to be recognized at once just as the figure of Britannia is recognized, or as the figures of Caledonia, Hibernia, Gallia, Helvetia, and so on, are recognized. And as a souvenir of a visit to the old Mother Land—would not the comely head of this sculptured Canada look well in profile on a medal, after the fashion of *La République Française* on French coins, surrounded, let us suppose, by the legend:—*Canada unita: esto perpetua: ferax: felix: fausta*—"Canada made one; mayest thou endure, fruitful, prosperous, favoured of Heaven," an aspiration finding a response in every patriotic heart.

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[In illustration of this paper were exhibited, besides the photographs, an engraving of the interior of the Senate-House, showing the four statues; a large medallion with heads of George II. and Queen Caroline facing each other on the obverse, and on the reverse their seven sons and daughters; an engraved portrait of Queen Caroline; a two-pound gold piece (1739) of George II., inserted in a contemporary silver cup, and having, in addition to the usual titles of the king, the following—*Brunsvicensis et Luneburgensis Dux: Sacri Imperii Romani Archi-Thesaurius et Elector*, abbreviated thus: B:ET:L:D:S:R:I:A:T.ET:E. Also an engraving of the seated bronze figure of the Prince Consort in the Memorial.]